



**T**he N.C. Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), in partnership with Child Care Services Association, implemented the **North Carolina Babies First (NCB1)** program in the four Transformation Zone counties in northeastern North Carolina (Beaufort, Bertie, Chowan and Hyde) supported by N.C.'s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

North Carolina Babies First was started as a part day infant-toddler program to serve young learners, infants and one-year-olds, and their families in the Transformation Zone. Soon after beginning NCB1, the program transitioned to a full day service program. North Carolina Babies First (NCB1) was designed to offer high-quality early learning experiences to positively impact the developmental trajectory of young learners with, or at risk for, developmental delays as a result of environmental and/or biological factors including poverty, family stress, health care, or other special needs. The goals for NCB1 were to increase the quality of available infant-toddler care and to provide high-quality care for unserved infants and toddlers in the area.

NCB1 was modeled after North Carolina's state-funded pre-kindergarten program, NC Pre-K, which provides high-quality educational programs for our state's four-year-olds. NC Pre-K provided an opportunity to see the impact of a high-quality intervention on children and families in a high-need community. In addition, the NC Pre-K implementation highlights the capacity of programs to meet high standards when appropriate supports, both financial and programmatic, are available.

Quality improved in all NCB1 classrooms (total of 12) as indicated by an average Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) score of 4.212 at enrollment in NCB1 and an average of 5.29 at their first six month evaluation.

## North Carolina Babies First (NCB1)

### PARTNERS



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A total of 112 children were served during NCB1, with 100 percent of the children enrolled for six months or more showing positive developmental progress. The children served resided in the following counties: Hyde – four children, Chowan – two children, Bertie – 10 children, Beaufort – 96 children

NCB1 ended in Bertie County at the end of the 2015 funding cycle and will end in Beaufort County at the end of 2016. Hyde and Chowan Counties withdrew from NCB1 earlier in the funding cycle due to lack of need (Chowan did not have families apply for NCB1) and lack of facilities (Hyde due to closure of the only child care center in the county).

Pictures demonstrating NCB1 successes:

*A natural outdoor play space as created at one site.*



*At this center a protected area for non-mobile infants to have floor time was created.*



*Moveable steps were added in a toddler changing area to increase children's independence as well as to protect teachers' backs.*



*In this picture a teacher is working closely with a toddler on a puzzle. The toddler is sitting on her lap.*



*Before and After picture – At this site the toddlers had to walk across the parking lot to access the outside area. By fencing in this area, this*

*meant a protected route was created as well as a shaded space for a swing and small toys.*



For more information about NCB1, go to

<http://earlylearningchallenge.nc.gov/activities/high-quality-4-5-star-infant-toddler-programs-transformation-zone>. ■